

BIBLE READING FOR 2023

WEEK #45

HOSEA & JOEL

11-05-23

Monday - Hosea 1-4

Wednesday - Hosea 9-11

Friday - Joel 1-3

Tuesday - Hosea 5-8

Thursday - Hosea 12-14

Hosea is the first book of the Minor Prophets, a group of twelve writings that comprise the last portion of the Old Testament and concludes with Malachi. The author is stated in the very first verse to be Hosea the son of Beerī. He tells us that his ministry was during the reigns of four kings of Judah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah and one king of Israel, Jeroboam the son of Joash, also known as Jeroboam II. Considering the time that these kings ruled we can reasonably consider Hosea served as a prophet for God for approximately 40 years from about 755 B.C to about 715 B.C. Since his message was to the Northern Kingdom of Israel his book would have been written sometime during these years prior to 722 B.C. when Israel was taken into captivity by the Assyrians.

As John is called the apostle of love in the New Testament so Hosea is called the prophet of love in the Old Testament. This comes about because of the analogy the Lord makes between Hosea and his wife and God and His bride, Israel. Hosea's wife was unfaithful to him to the point of leaving him, living as a prostitute and ending up in slavery. Yet Hosea bought her back and re-established his relationship with her. The Lord clearly commanded him to do this but the wording passage also lets us know that, in spite of what she had done, Hosea still loved his wife. The parallel is made with God and Israel. God was a loving Spouse but Israel was His unfaithful wife. She had turned to other gods and worshipped them, which was considered spiritual adultery. She had also sunk to the depths of depravity by committing all kinds of sin in rebellion to God. In spite of this the Lord was willing to take her back if she would repent, because He loved her. Unfortunately she was unwilling to listen to the Lord and as a nation was destroyed in 722 B.C.

An outline for Hosea: 1.) Hosea and his unfaithful wife 1-3
2.) God and unfaithful Israel 4-14

Joel is one of the shorter books of the prophets and yet in no way played a minor role in the guidance of God's people. He encouraged Judah to recognize the necessity of serving the Lord or having to experience judgment against the nation by God. He also uttered prophecy that would see its fulfillment in the establishment of the church, God's spiritual kingdom, hundreds of years later.

The author of the book is Joel the son of Pethuel, Joel 1:1, but we have no further information about him. He mentions no kings or other individuals to help us with the dating of his book. Therefore the speculation of when it was written ranges from around 830 B.C. to about 400 B.C. It appears more favor an earlier rather than a later date.

The book of Joel begins with a description of the devastation upon Judah from a locust plague and a drought that followed. It is debated but appears that the locusts and drought referred to were literal and yet would be followed by the army of another nation if Judah did not repent and return to God. Joel's

message to the people of his day, whether Jew or Gentile, was that the day of the Lord was near and it was going to be a time of destruction for the enemies of God and a time of deliverance for those faithful to Him. Amidst the warnings that had immediate application for those who first received them were also statements prophesying events that would take place on the day of Pentecost. In Acts 2:17-21 Peter quotes Joel 2:28-32 as explanation of the miracles that took place at that time. Because of this some refer to Joel as the Prophet of Pentecost.

An outline for Joel: 1.) The day of the Lord in the past. 1
2.) The day of the Lord in the future. 2-3

Questions for Hosea and Joel:

- 1.) What is Israel condemned for in Hosea 2:1-13?
- 2.) In Hosea 3:2, what did Hosea do, which he had been instructed to do by God?
- 3.) How did that relate to God and Israel according to Hosea 3:5?
- 4.) Israel's loyalty is described as being like what in Hosea 6:4?
- 5.) What does God tell His people that He will do in Joel 2:28-29?

Answers to questions for Week #44 – Daniel:

- 1.) Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah were the men mentioned and their new names were Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego.
- 2.) So that they all might go to God in prayer and ask for His help.
- 3.) Whether or not God saved their lives, they were not going to serve the gods of Nebuchadnezzar or worship the golden image which he had set up.
- 4.) Four kings.
- 5.) He was reading Jeremiah and discovered that the captivity was to last seventy years.